

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. On 25 October 1948, the Egyptian Government transmitted notes to the Spanish Government through the Spanish Minister in Cairo and the Egyptian Minister in Madrid. These notes deplored conditions existing in Spanish Morocco and emphasized the serious effect that the continuance of the prevailing situation could have on cooperation between Spain and the Arab World.
2. In a preamble the Egyptian Government pointed out that the intent of the note was not to intervene in Spanish affairs, but to bring about the solution of a difficult problem which is of mutual interest and which has been a hindrance to better Hispanic-Arabic relations. The introduction emphasized that Hispanic-Egyptian relations could be improved only when Spain proves its good intentions in regard to solution of the question.
3. There followed a detailed exposition of Moroccan grievances arising from alleged Spanish oppression and miserable economic conditions, including reports received in Egypt of illegal arrests, miscarriages of justice, lack of educational facilities, and lack of participation in government. The Egyptian Government explained that it did not doubt that Spain is planning to provide greater justice and better conditions, but deemed an acceleration of the program necessary in order to prevent deterioration of the strong friendship between Spain and the entire Arab World.
4. The Egyptian Government further states that it sincerely hoped that Spain would carefully consider its views on this matter and would regard this note as a gesture of friendship. It said that the Egyptian Government desires to cooperate closely with the Spanish Government in the suppression of Communism. If Spain would only bring about an equitable solution of the Spanish Moroccan problem, the Egyptian Government believes that many of the conditions favoring the growth of Communism would disappear and the present criticism of Spain in international circles would decrease.
5. On 28 October 1948, the Spanish Government replied to the Egyptian note, saying that it did not doubt the good intentions of the Egyptian Government in presenting its views on the situation in Spanish Morocco. Spain also

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wished to take the opportunity to renew its assurances of sympathy with the Arab nations. The Spanish Government pointed out, however, that the deplorable conditions in Spanish Morocco may be attributed directly to Nationalist agitators, who caused the riots of February 1948. If it had not been for the timely intervention of the Spanish authorities, great harm would have come to Morocco and Spain.

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6. The reply also accused Abdeljalek TORRES, Islah Party leader, of attempting to re-enter Spanish Morocco without the proper documents. It added that the necessary papers would have been given to TORRES if he had requested them through proper channels. It said that, furthermore, TORRES is a dangerous agitator. (Comment: TORRES held a valid Moroccan passport and no entry permit is required for Spanish Moroccans.)
 7. The Egyptian Government considers the Spanish reply inadequate but before taking any further steps, the Egyptian Foreign Minister consulted Islah Party leaders through Mohamed ben ABOUD and Mohamed el PASSI, the two Islah representatives in the Maghreb office in Cairo. The Islah leaders are studying paraphrases of the notes exchanged between Egypt and Spain and have not yet given their recommendations. They intend, however, to suggest that the Egyptian Government send another note stating that a detailed discussion of the Tetuan affair of February 1948 and other past incidents at this time is of little value, but that the serious overall situation in Spanish Morocco should be given early consideration.
 8. Lieutenant General Jose Enrique VARELA, High Commissioner of Spanish Morocco, is reported to have been under fire for some time by the group in the Spanish Foreign Office which views a rapprochement with the Arab Nations as a primary objective of present Spanish Foreign policy. Source states that VARELA has recently become very annoyed with Spanish Foreign Minister ARTAJO and has openly criticized him to the Jalifa and to Ahmed BACHIR, Secretary General of the Spanish Maghzen Government.
 9. Through a trip to the Rif region of Spanish Morocco at the end of October, VARELA attempted to prove to the population and to Madrid the extent of his popularity. In spite of the fact that persons failing to attend the celebrations en route in his honor were fined 200 pesetas, VARELA seems to have fairly well convinced himself of his personal popularity. He is alleged to have cited an example to the Jalifa, recounting that at one stop he heard people shout an obscenity to the title of High Commissioner but following it with a heartfelt "Varela, Viva, Viva".
 10. On his return to Tetuan, VARELA forced the publication in the newspaper "el Dia", against the editor's protests, of a statement purported to come from the Jalifa, expressing his devotion to the Caudillo and appreciation of the great works of Spain and General VARELA in Spanish Morocco. When the Jalifa sent his secretary to demand an explanation, VARELA replied that as the High Commissioner and Foreign Minister of Spanish Morocco, he is authorized to issue statements in the Jalifa's name.
 11. VARELA reportedly was taking further steps to prove his popularity by ordering the Pasha of Tetuan to prepare a celebration in his honor on 25 November, on which occasion he was to be appointed the "adopted son of Tetuan". Many businessmen of Tetuan were ordered to contribute to the expenses of this elaborate ceremony. Some refused and others were persuaded to pay with the promises that their cooperation would speed the return of the exiled nationalist leaders. VARELA transmitted his orders for this ceremony through Tomas GARCIA Figueras, Spanish Commissioner of Education, and Luis CARVAJAL Arrieta, Territorial Controller, thus completely bypassing Brigadier General Manuel LARREA Rodriguez, Delegate of Native Affairs of the High Commissioner.
 12. LARREA called on the High Commissioner to protest, indicating to VARELA that the Tetuan Municipal Council should have first been consulted and the proposal

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then submitted to the Jalifa for his approval. LARREA expressed his disapproval of the celebration, particularly as the population is being forced to finance it at the very moment when property taxes are being raised thirty percent. When LARREA showed his doubt as to the spontaneity of the celebration, VARELA shouted that he is loved by the people and that the event would take place in spite of LARREA's objections.

13. LARREA has resigned as head of the Office of Native Affairs, according to source, but he does not know whether the resignation has been accepted.

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